MARIOFAN SCANS

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RUNNING INTO A GIANT CLOSE-UP OF YOUR OWN FACE IN THE MIDDLE OF TOWN...
I'M TELLING YOU, HURRY UP AND TURN OFF THAT BIG SCREEN!!
はいはい
RARE PERSON
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS EVERY DAY...

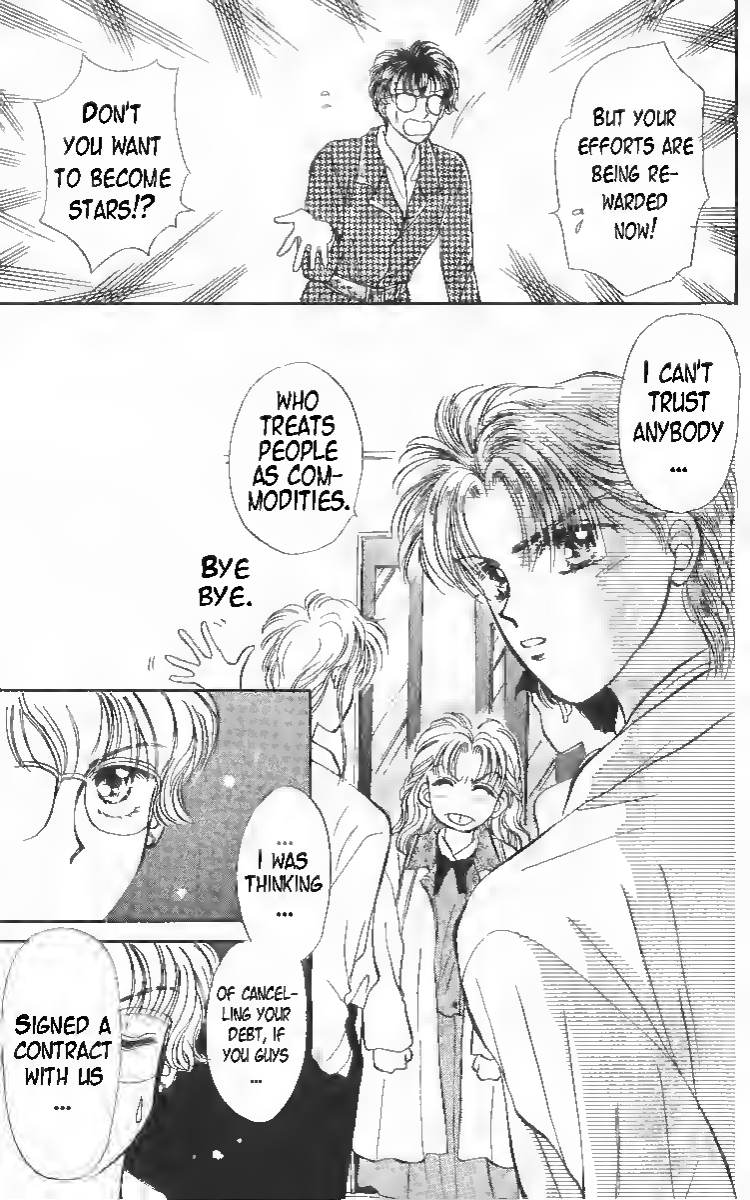
I DIDN'T EXPECT THIS REACTION.
I THOUGHT YOU'D ALL BE HAPPIER ABOUT IT.
CALL IT AURORA VISION", PLEASE.
VIP CEO
CALM DOWN, SERIKA-SAN!
THIS IS TROUBLESOME...
BEFORE WE REALIZED IT, WE'D BECOME FAMOUS.
APPARENTLY THAT VIDEO HAS BEEN PLAYING IN TOWN NONSTOP SINCE THE COMPETITION.
DON'T MESS WITH US! WE NEVER ASKED FOR THIS! IT'S TOO EMBARRASSING I CAN'T EVEN WALK AROUND TOWN ANYMORE NOW!
THERE THERE.

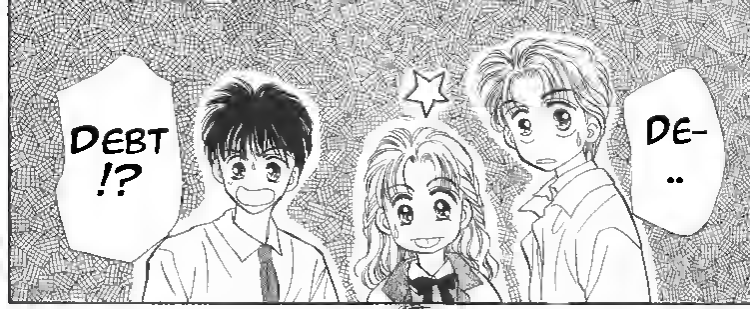
!
WE WERE PLANNING TO EXPOSE YOU GUYS TO THE PUBLIC THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE COUNTRY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
BECAUSE YOU GUYS ARE GOING TO...
DEBUT UNDER OUR RECORD LABEL.

DE-
...
DEBUT!?
BUT... WE DIDN'T EVEN WIN THE GRAND PRIZE.
HUH!? WE'RE GONNA BE CELEBRITIES!?
COMPETITIONS LIKE THAT...
ARE MEAN-INGLESS.

LET ME TELL YOU WHAT GOES ON BEHIND THE SCENES.
THE REAL PURPOSE OF COMPETITIONS IS TO ENTER BANDS WHOSE DEBUT HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED, AND LET THEM WIN.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S SIMPLY TO GIVE THEM EXPOSURE.
!
YOU GUYS ARE JUST A SURPRISE WE PICKED UP ALONG THE WAY.
YOUR PERFORMANCE WAS PRETTY MESSY BACK THEN.
BUT I THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO SELL YOUR MUSIC.
IF YOU FOLLOW MY DIRECTIONS ...
I'LL DEFINITELY MAKE YOU INTO REAL STARS.

WHAT THE HECK !!?
SO THE WINNER OF THE COMPE-TITION IS DECIDED BEFORE-HAND!?
AH... YOU SCARED ME
THEN WHY DID WE EVEN BOTHER TO WORK SO HARD TOWARDS THAT PERFORMANCE!? THIS PISSES ME OFF!!
SFX: SLAM
THAT'S JUST UNFAIR.
IS THIS HOW THE INDUSTRY WORKS...?
WE WOULDN'T LIKE IT...
IF YOU TREATED US LIKE LITTLE KIDS AND MADE FUN OF US, OLD LADY!
OLD ...


DON'T YOU WANT TO BECOME STARS!?
BUT YOUR EFFORTS ARE BEING REWARDED NOW!
I CAN'T TRUST ANYBODY ...
WHO TREATS PEOPLE AS COMMODITIES.
BYE BYE.
... I WAS THINKING ...
OF CANCELLING YOUR DEBT, IF YOU GUYS ...
SIGNED A CONTRACT WITH US ...


DEBT !?
DE-..

SFX: SMILE
ニヤッ

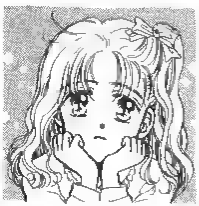
WHEN YOU GUYS SCREAMED INTO THE MICROPHONES, ALL THE AUDIO EQUIPMENT WENT BUST. WE CAN'T USE IT ANYMORE.
ALSO, ONE AMPLIFIER, ONE CAMERA, AND 3 LIGHTS.
AH
THIS VIDEO PROVES THAT YOU DID IT.
IT'S US...

WELL... ONLY ABOUT THIS MUCH.
600000
BEEP BEEP BEEP
ALRIGHT. WE'LL PAY YOU BACK.
HOW MUCH IS IT?
I HAVE SOME SAVINGS ...
BUT IF WE ALL TOOK ON PART-TIME JOBS FOR A FEW MONTHS, IT SHOULD WORK OUT SOMEHOW ...
NO WAY!
SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND!?
ACK!
A DIGIT!!
6000000
YOU'RE MISSING ...
目カガーン
SFX: STUNNED

6 MILLION!?
AH...
MY HEAD HURTS
MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST MAKE OUR DEBUT THEN?
I DON'T LIKE THAT OLD LADY, BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT OUR DREAM WOULD COME TRUE
THAT WOULD BE LIKE A VILLAGE GIRL SELLING HER BODY TO AN EVIL OFFICIAL TO PAY OFF HER DEBT
ARATA'S HOUSE
THAT'S RIGHT, WE CAN'T DO THAT!
TOMOKA, YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT.
WE'LL COME UP WITH SOMETHING
COOOL!

WHY ARE YOU LEAVING ME OUT? THAT'S NOT FAIR!
NOT FAIR...?
I'M THE ONE WHO ACTED FIRST, SO I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS TOO.

YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT EITHER.
I'LL DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT BY MYSELF.



SERIKA-SAN...?

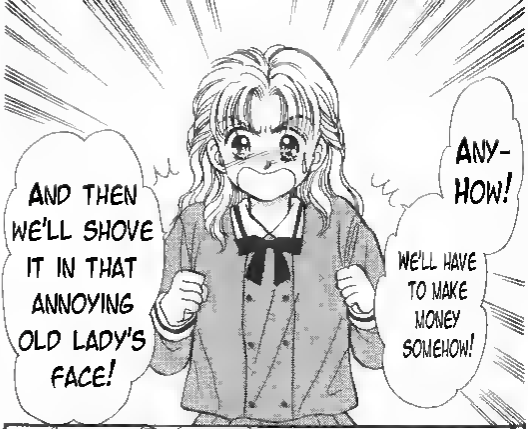
WHERE ARE YOU FROM, ANYWAYS ?
UM ...
DON'T YOUR PARENTS SEND YOU ANY MONEY ?
I KNOW YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF SAVINGS FOR YOUR JOB, BUT AREN'T YOU SAVING THAT FOR SOMETHING ELSE ?
WHAT!? COULD YOU DO THAT, SERIKA-SAN ?

ALL AT ONCE ...
ほこ
先
CENTER OF ATTENTION
DON'T ASK SO MANY THINGS ...

SFX: AHEM
I'M NOT SURE I CAN DO IT.
AND I'M NOT ... GETTING ANYTHING ...
……

I DON'T EVEN ...
... HAVE PARENTS ANY-MORE.
THE REASON I'M SAVING MONEY ...
IS BECAUSE ...
I WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE.
SFX MUTTER
COLLEGE !?

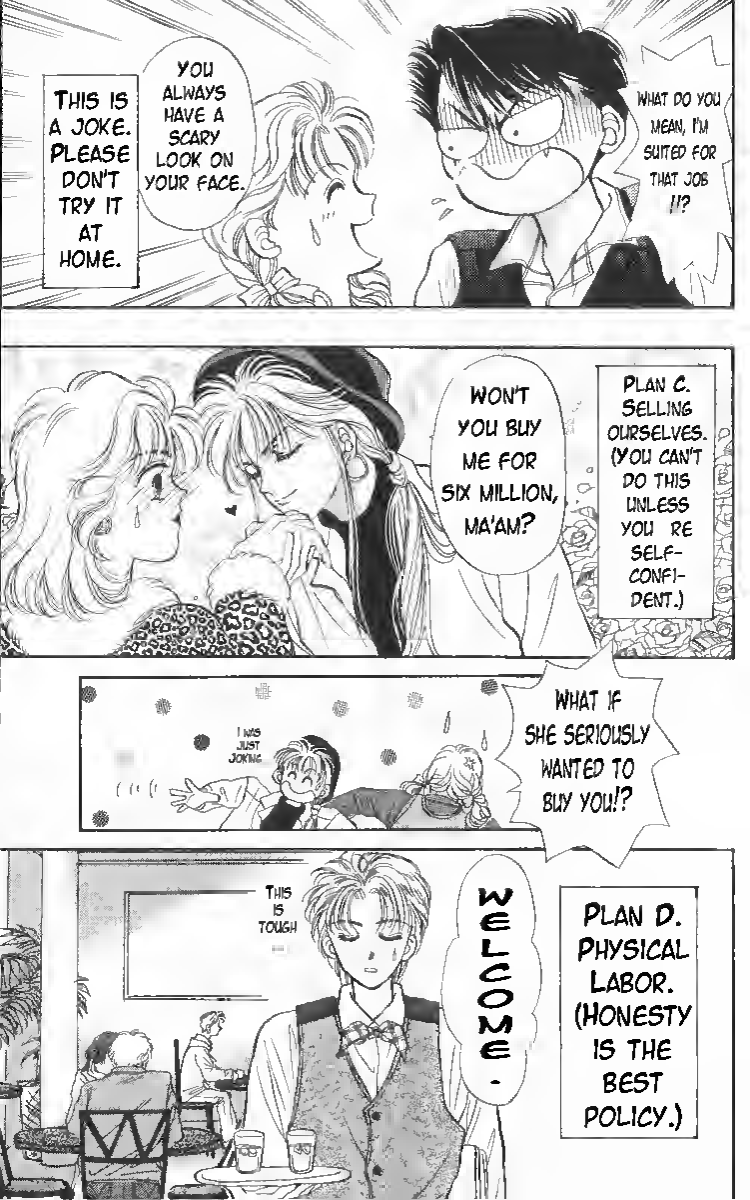
WOW, I HADN'T EXPECTED THAT FROM YOU! YOU NEVER TOLD ME!
RAPID FIRE
WHICH COLLEGE? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO STUDY?
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO AFTER THAT?
WHY DID YOU DROP OUT OF SCHOOL THEN?
SFX: GULP...
SFX: BA-DUMP
ドキッ
AH, WELL...
IT'S FINE IF YOU DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT IT...
L-LET'S GET BACK ON TOPIC!


ANY-HOW!
WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE MONEY SOMEHOW!
AND THEN WE'LL SHOVE IT IN THAT ANNOYING OLD LADY'S FACE!

IT'D BE GREAT IF WE COULD MAKE MONEY, BUT ...
HOW DID YOU WANNA MAKE SIX MILLION?
WE... WE'LL START THINKING ABOUT THAT NOW.

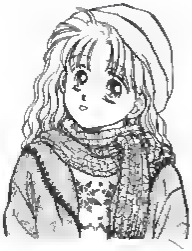
GRANDMA!
PLAN A: BEGGING (IF IT GOES WELL, YOU CAN GET LOTS OF MONEY)

CAN I GET MY ALLOWANCE EARLY?
HOW MUCH?
SIX MILLION.
SHE SAID NO.
OF COURSE SHE WOULD.
SFX: EEEP!
PLAN B: EXTORTION (THEY CHOSE THE ONE MOST SUITED FOR THE JOB.)
HEY MAN. IF YOU DON'T WANNA GET HURT, GIMME SOME CASH.


THIS IS A JOKE. PLEASE DON'T TRY IT AT HOME.
YOU ALWAYS HAVE A SCARY LOOK ON YOUR FACE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, I'M SUITED FOR THAT JOB !!?
PLAN C. SELLING OURSELVES. (YOU CAN'T DO THIS UNLESS YOU RE SELF-CONFI-DENT.)
WON'T YOU BUY ME FOR SIX MILLION, MA'AM?
I WAS JUST JOKING.
WHAT IF SHE SERIOUSLY WANTED TO BUY YOU!?
THIS IS TOUGH
WELCOME.
PLAN D. PHYSICAL LABOR. (HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.)

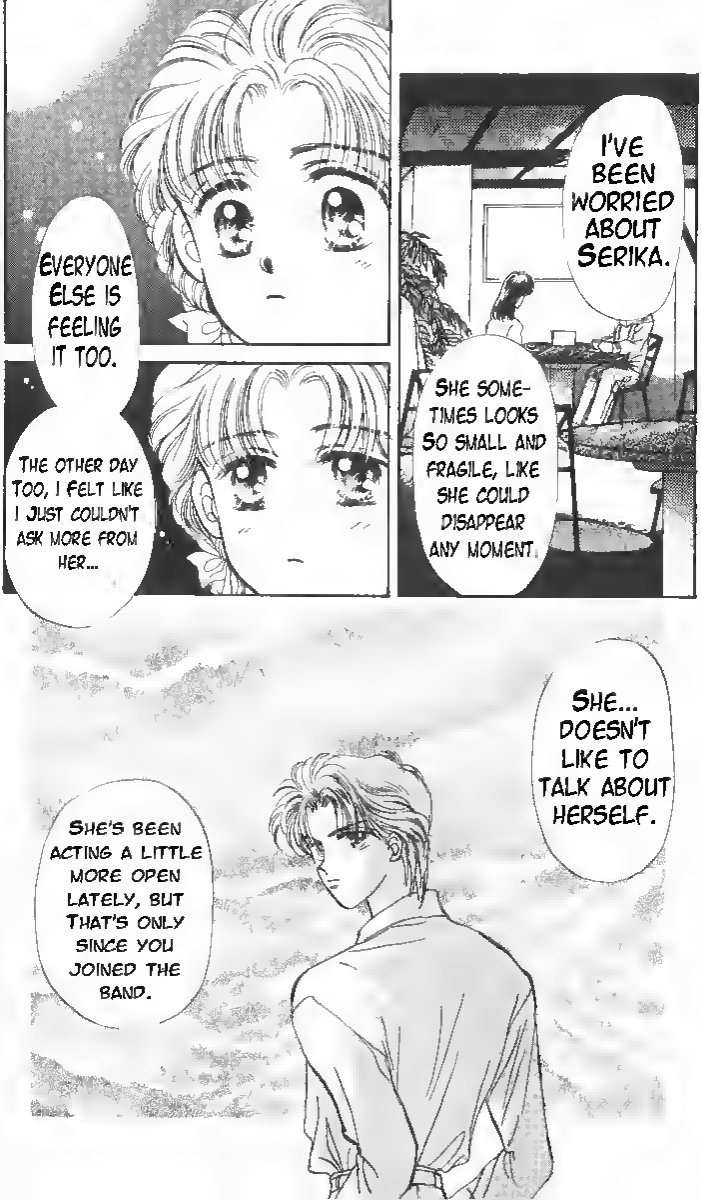
WHAT'S WITH THAT RESPONSE?
I EVEN BROUGHT YOU SOME REFRESHMENTS!
UGH. YOU'RE HERE AGAIN.
SERIKA-SAN!
N-NO, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT! TAKE-CHAN AND THE OTHERS WERE WITH US AT FIRST.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DENY IT SO BLUNTLY. NOT THAT I CARE, BUT.
ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE A DATE?
IF WE'RE GONNA WORK, WHY DON'T WE JUST WORK HERE?
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
IF THERE WAS, I WOULD BE DOING IT ALREADY.
THERE AREN'T ANY GOOD JOBS IN HERE...
ISN'T THERE AN EASY WAY TO MAKE LOTS OF MONEY FAST?
BOOK: PART-TIME JOBS INFORMATION

WHY NOT?
HUH? WOULD YOU BE OKAY WITH THAT?
BECAUSE WE'D BE TOGETHER WITH SERIKA-SAN THE WHOLE TIME THEN.



SFX. GASP
.....
OOPS...

I STOPPED BEING JEALOUS A LONG TIME AGO. IT'S STUPID.
AND BESIDES ....

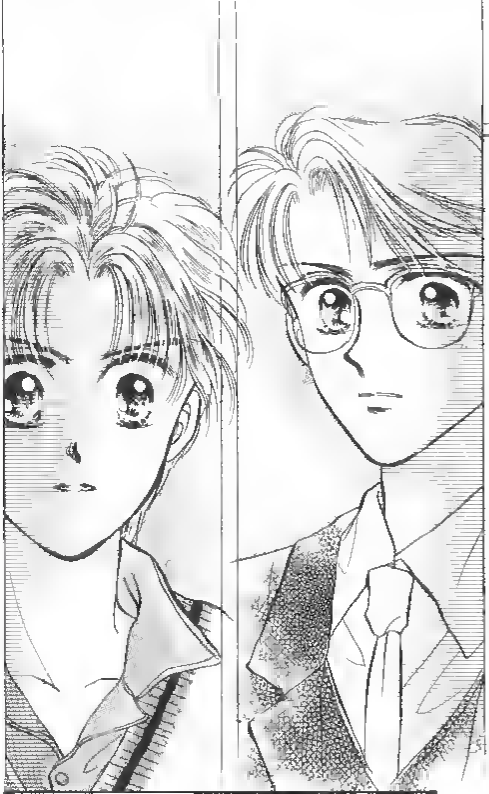

I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT SERIKA.
SHE SOMETIMES LOOKS SO SMALL AND FRAGILE, LIKE SHE COULD DISAPPEAR ANY MOMENT.
EVERYONE ELSE IS FEELING IT TOO.
THE OTHER DAY TOO, I FELT LIKE I JUST COULDN'T ASK MORE FROM HER...
SHE... DOESN'T LIKE TO TALK ABOUT HERSELF.
SHE'S BEEN ACTING A LITTLE MORE OPEN LATELY, BUT THAT'S ONLY SINCE YOU JOINED THE BAND.

SHE SEEMS TO HAVE HER REASONS, SO COULD YOU SPEND SOME MORE TIME WITH HER, AND TRY TO ASK ABOUT IT?
ALRIGHT.
I'LL DO THAT.
IF IT'S YOU, SHE MIGHT OPEN UP EVEN MORE AND TELL YOU SOME THINGS.
THIS IS... GETTING KINDA COM-PLICATED ...
BEING TOLD SOMETHING LIKE THAT BY ARATA-KUN ...
TOMOKA!
ARATA!
I JUST GOT A PHONE CALL FROM THAT CEO FROM VIP.
SHE SAID SHE HAD SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT, SO WE SHOULD COME TO THE OFFICE RIGHT NOW.

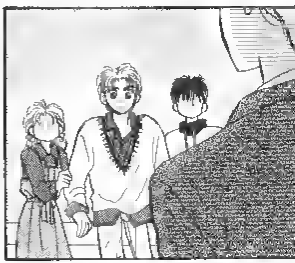
I WONDER WHAT SHE MEANT BY SOMETHING IMPORTANT".
SHE WENT THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF CALLING YOUR WORKPLACE, SO IT MUST BE VERY IMPOR-TANT, DON'T YOU THINK?
SFX TA-DAH

WHA-...
IT'S CASH... CASH...
WHAT... IS THIS!?
COSBY

SOMEBODY OFFERED TO PAY OFF YOUR DEBT.
IT'S AMAZING. YOU HAVE A SPONSOR WILLING TO SHELL OUT SIX MILLION IN CASH.
WHAT!?
WH-WHO IS IT!?
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY CLUE?
I DON'T KNOW ANYBODY THAT RICH. YOU?
I HADN'T EVEN TOLD MY DAD ABOUT THIS.
HE SAID HE'D LIKE TO MEET YOU.
SFX: CLICK
カチャ
IS IT SOMEONE YOU KNOW, SERIKA-SAN?
ME...?



SMILE
SERIKA-SAN.
LONG TIME NO SEE.



SFX: GRAB
I'M GLAD YOU LOOK WELL!
I'VE MEANT TO GO SEE YOU SO MANY TIMES, BUT I JUST COULDN'T MAKE IT.
I MISSED YOU SO MUCH!!
YOU MUST BE HER FRIENDS. NICE TO MEET YOU.
HERE!
HERE!
TAKE THIS AS A TOKEN OF OUR ACQUAINTANCE
...
THAT GUY IS SO LIVELY.
WON'T YOU INTRODUCE US, SEEKA-SAN?
AH... UM...
SFX. THUNK
WHO ARE YOU AGAIN!?

I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED. WE'VE ONLY EVER MET ONCE BEFORE.
I DOUBTED MY EYES WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU TOO. YOUR HAIR HAS GROWN A LOT.
MY HAIR !?
I'VE NEVER HAD IT MUCH SHORTER THAN THIS ...
AAAAAAAH!!

TL NOTE: THE KANJI IN FUYUHIKO'S NAME LITERALLY MEAN "WINTER BOY".
I'M SERIKA-SAN'S...
FIANCE.
WHO IS THIS GUY? DOES HE SHOCK YOU THAT MUCH!?
DIRECTOR TAKASHIMIZU FUYUHIKO FROM NK PHARMACEUTICS.
FUYUHIKO?
WHAT AN UNLUCKY SOUNDING NAME...
FI-...

SERIKA-SAN, ARE YOU GONNA MARRY THIS GUY!?
WHAT'S THIS!? WHAT'S THIS!?
D-D-DID HE SAY "FIANCE"...!?
...YOU MUST BE INSANE.
YOU STILL INTEND TO MARRY A GIRL WHO DID SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
TO YOU, IT MIGHT JUST BE SOMETHING YOUR PARENTS DECIDED ON THEIR OWN...

IN RETURN FOR THE SIX MILLION YEN...
I'D LIKE YOU TO COME BACK HOME.
BUT FOR ME, THIS IS MY OWN DECISION.
I WANT TO MARRY YOU, SERIKA-SAN.

YOUR FATHER TOLD ME TO BRING YOU BACK...
EVEN IF IT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO FORCE YOU.
SO THAT SIX MILLION IS MY DAD'S CASH.
HE'S PROBABLY BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON ME THE WHOLE TIME.
IN THAT CASE, I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS MONEY.
I'LL NEED HER AND HER BAND TO CARRY OUR AGENCY IN THE FUTURE.
SFX: GRAB
MA'AM, SHE CAN'T DO THAT.
SFX: TOSS

I'LL NEVER RETURN TO THAT HOUSE ANYMORE!
SO TAKE YOUR MONEY AND LEAVE, AND TELL MY SHITTY OLD MAN I'M NEVER COMING BACK!
SERIKA-SAN.
SHE'S RIGHT!! SHE'S RIGHT!! SHE'S RIGHT!!
SFX: BAM

I... DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.
BUT YOU CAN'T JUST SUDDENLY COME OUT OF NOWHERE AND START TALKING ABOUT MARRIAGE AND FAMILY!!
I WON'T... I WON'T...
I BET SHE'S ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING OUTRAGEOUS AGAIN...
TOMO-...
I WON'T GIVE SERIKA-SAN TO SOMEONE LIKE YOU!